

**Testimony in Favor of AB-685
Before the Wisconsin Assembly
Children and Family Law Committee
February 21, 2008**

My name is Steve Blake, I represent Wisconsin Fathers for Children and Families and we support AB-685.

WFCF is always interested in anything that will reduce conflict between parents. This bill promises to do just that. Making sure all parents know the requirement of a parenting plan when they are getting divorced and have enough time to rationally prepare one is certainly a step in the right direction.

This bill makes sense in that it will persuade some parents that fighting working things out in advance is much preferable to fighting it out in the courtroom. This bill discourages that behavior to a certain extent. What is really needed however is the presumption of equal treatment for both parents.

I ask that the members of this committee recommend passage of AB-685.

Respectfully submitted

Steve Blake
President
Wisconsin Fathers for Children and Families

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February 22, 2008

Representative Carol Owens, Chair
Assembly Committee on Children and Family Law
Room 315 North
P.O. Box 8953
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53708

**RE: 2007 Assembly Bill 685
2007 Assembly Bill 700**

Dear Rep. Owens:

Due to the condition of the roads, I chose not to attend the public hearing on these bills on February 21, 2008, as I am in support of them.

As a member of the Legislative Council's Special Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families and my experiences in the field, I believe these bills will have significant impact on strengthening Wisconsin families.

AB 685 sets the stage for the Committee's focus on improving co-parenting in divorced, separated and unmarried parents. It is a step that encourages not only the parents to work together but also the Wisconsin legal system to facilitate both parents be involved in their child's life to the maximum extent feasible.

AB 700 is a linchpin in the Wisconsin's system for supporting Wisconsin's families. In my experience for 20 years in a county Department of Social Services, CST has been one of the most effective programs in working with struggling families. It works with families at risk of neglecting children but it works most effectively with those entering the system because of stresses, like children with severe disabilities.

I know this committee, the Legislature and the Governor are committed to strengthening Wisconsin families and these two bills are two stones in that foundation of support.

Sincerely,



Jon D. Angeli